

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ARA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01
ACDA-07 /103 W

-----015427 231333Z /47

R 231050Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5208
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1450

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, ET, SO, UR, US
SUBJ: THE GSDR LINE: SOVIET/CUBAN SUPPORT FOR ETHIOPIA

REFS: A) STATE 198297; B) MOGADISCIO 1434 (NOTAL)

1. SOMALI OFFICIALS, FROM AMBASSADOR ADDOU (REF A) TO FONMIN ABDURAHMAN JAMA BARRE (REF B), ARE PEDDLING A DISTORTED VIEW OF ETHIOPIAN DEVELOPMENTS. LINE TAKEN IN WASHINGTON WITH AF/E WAS SIMILAR TO LINE TAKEN IN MOGADISCIO WITH CONGRESSMAN SIKES (MOGADISCIO 1428) AND EMBOFF ON FOLLOWING DAY. MOGADISCIO DISTORTIONS HOWEVER ARE MORE PRIMITIVE.

2. THIS IS NOT RPT NOT THE LINE THAT PRESIDENT SIAD TOOK WITH CONGRESSMAN SIKES DURING THEIR TALK ON AUGUST 18 (MOGADISCIO 1429). IF SIKES TALK WITH SIAD ESTABLISHED VERY LITTLE, IT DID SUSTAIN OUR VIEW THAT SIAD WAS STAYING ABOVE THE BATTLE, LETTING HIS OFFICIALS CLAIM THAT 15,000 CUBANS IN ETHIOPIA,
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THAT GSDR DESPERATELY NEED IMMEDIATE WESTERN MILITARY AID AND THAT ETHIOPIAN INVASION IS IMMINENT. HE HAS REMAINED ALOOF FROM RHETORICAL EXCESSES. HE HAS BROKEN HIS SILENCE ONLY ONCE IN RECENT WEEKS WHEN HE WARNED THE CUBANS AND THE SOVIET UNION ABOUT THEIR ETHIOPIAN ROLE. WITH THE CUBANS, HE MADE A MORE-IN-SORROW-THAN-IN-ANGER PITCH AS BEFITS THE DIGNITY OF A SOCIALIST STATESMEN WITH COLLEAGUES

IN BOTH HAVANA AND MOSCOW.

3. WHAT ARE SUCH DISTORTIONS SUPPOSED TO ACCOMPLISH?

LIKE AF/E, WE ASSUME THAT THE PURPOSE IS TO SCARE UP SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA IN THE WEST, AMONG ARAB NATIONS AND ANYPLACE ELSE WHERE HELP -- EITHER MILITARY OR ECONOMIC -- MIGHT BE AVAILABLE. SUCH DISTORTIONS PROVIDE AN ESPECIALLY EASY OR CONVENIENT EXCUSE FOR SOME DIPLOMATS -- AND PARTICULARLY ARAB DIPLOMATS -- TO BELIEVE WHAT THEY ALREADY WANT TO BELIEVE ABOUT EVENTS IN HORN. IF SUCH DIPLOMATS OR NATIONS THEY REPRESENT HAVE ONLY DIMMEST SENSE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ETHIOPIA, THEN THE RATIONALE IS ALL THE MORE READILY DIGESTED.

4. BUT WE ARE LESS CERTAIN THAT SOMALI OFFICIALS LIKE

ADDU OR EVEN FONMIN ABDURAHMAN HAVE RESOURCES, STAMINA OR EVEN THE WILL NOT TO BELIEVE THESE DISTORTIONS. LIKE MANY SOMALIS WHO ARE FAR REMOVED FROM GOVERNMENT, THEY ARE OFTEN VICTIMIZED BY SAME LACK OF INFORMATION WHICH BEWILDERS MOGADISCIO DIPLOMATS. THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT MIGHT REALLY BE HAPPENING IN HIGHEST COUNCILS OF GSDR, IN ETHIOPIA OR IN MOSCOW. THEY ALSO DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN SIAD'S HEAD.

5. SO THEY TOO BELIEVE BECAUSE THEY WANT TO BELIEVE.

SIAD MAKES USE OF THIS WILL TO BELIEVE. WHEN HE SENDS AN CONFIDENTIAL

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EMISSARY TO AN ARAB CAPITAL, HE CHOOSES THOSE SOMALIS WHO GENUINELY WISH CLOSER LINKS WITH THE ARAB WORLD AND WHO CAN THEREFORE MOST PLAUSIBLY REINFORCE SIAD POLICY LINE WITH THEIR OWN PERSONAL POLITICS. AMBASSADOR ADDU IS IN WASHINGTON FOR SAME REASON.

6. WHAT IS SIAD'S PURPOSE IN USING SUCH TACTICS? THE

PRINCIPAL ADVANTAGE IS THAT AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT HE CAN DISASSOCIATE HIMSELF FROM THE CLAIMS OR EXTRAVAGANCES OF HIS ENVOYS SHOULD HE NEED TO DO SO. HE CAN NEVER BE PERSONALLY IDENTIFIED WITH THE MISREPRESENTATIONS. HE CAN CLAIM HE WAS MISREPRESENTED OR DECEIVED BY HIS SUBORDINATES.

7. IF SOME WEEKS HENCE SIAD WISHED TO MAKE THE THREAT OF 15,000

CUBAN SOLDIERS IN ETHIOPIA DISAPPEAR, HE MIGHT SAY THAT AN AGREEMENT WITH USSR HAS REMOVED SUCH POSSIBILITY. IF HE WANTED TO PUT SOMALI MILITARY AT EASE ABOUT ETHIOPIAN THREAT, HE MIGHT SUGGEST THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ADDIS ARE NOW CALLED FOR. IN EFFECT, SIAD CAN MAKE OF THE TRUTH EXACTLY WHAT HE WISHES TO MAKE OF IT WHEN IT SUITS HIS PURPOSE TO DO SO. THOSE HAVE BEEN HIS TACTICS IN THE PAST

AND THOSE ARE HIS TACTICS NOW.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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